



July 18, 2005

## Council Approves Plans to Ensure County Keeps “Measuring Up”

### Auditor will Emphasize Performance Audits to Increase Efficiency

The Metropolitan King County Council today approved legislation that emphasizes the use of performance audits conducted by the [King County Auditor](#) and encourages the development of a countywide performance measurement system as a vehicle for improving the accountability and efficiency of county government.

The Auditor’s Office, an independent agency of the Metropolitan King County Council, conducts independent audits and other studies regarding the integrity of financial management systems, the quality and efficiency of agencies and programs, and program effectiveness.

“County taxpayers have a right to see how agencies and programs funded by their tax dollars are performing,” said Councilmember [Jane Hague](#), Chair of the Council’s [Labor, Operations and Technology Committee](#). “Performance measurements also play a valuable role in assisting the County Council’s oversight function. County Auditor Cheryle Broom has been nationally recognized for the work done by her office, and this legislation expands her ability to make sure King County taxpayers are getting what they pay for.”

King County has been using performance measurements for over a decade. The Council has adopted legislation every year since 2002 encouraging the Executive to develop and implement performance measurement government-wide. Some agencies and Executive departments, such as the Sheriff’s Office, Assessor’s Office and Department of Natural Resources and Parks, have incorporated performance measurement into their strategic planning efforts and are using outcome performance measures. The Department of Natural Resources and Parks was recently awarded a Certificate of Excellence in Service Efforts and Accomplishments Reporting by the Association of Government Accountants for its nationally recognized performance measurement program.

The legislation passed by the Council strengthens the auditor’s responsibilities to conduct performance audits, declares the auditor should continue to act in an independent manner in analyzing the performance of county agencies, and states the auditor may provide oversight to county agencies in the development of performance measures and other performance improvement efforts. The legislation also gives a greater priority to countywide efforts to establish regular reporting to the public on the performance of their county government programs and services.

“From a business standpoint, performance measurements make sense,” said Hague. “They set clear goals that allow everyone to see if agencies are performing or in need of change. It has been good county policy and expanding and encouraging their use can only increase efficiency—which is a direct benefit to the taxpayer.”

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